

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT  
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

**Plant Abstract**

**Element Code:** PDEUP0H0F0

**Data Sensitivity:** No

**CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE**

**NAME:** *Croton fruticosus* Engelm. ex Torr.

**COMMON NAME:** Bush croton, shrubby croton, Encinillas, Hierba Loca.

**SYNONYMS:**

**FAMILY:** Euphorbiaceae

**AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION:** Torrey, Report on the United States and Mexican Boundary Survey ... Botany 2(1): 194-195. 1858 (1859).

**TYPE LOCALITY:** Syntype collected in expedition from western Texas to El Paso, New Mexico, United States of America.

**TYPE SPECIMEN:** Possible Type: GH-47060. F.J. Lindheimer 176, Apr 1846. Syntype: NY-246432, Charles Wright 639, May 1849-Oct 1849.

**TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS:** In the genus *Croton*, *C. fruticosus* is 1 of 8 species that occurs in Arizona, and 1 of 48 in North America.

**DESCRIPTION:** Aromatic, monoecious shrub to 2 m (6.6 ft) tall, with slender branches. Herbage grayish- or yellowish-tomentose, the hairs sometimes stellate. Leaves ovate-lanceolate, 3-7 cm (1.2-2.8 in) long, entire or with a few small glandular teeth, the petioles not more than half as long as the blades. Staminate flowers in loose racemes, sepals 5, oval, acute; petals 5, oblong-spatulate; stamens about 10. Pistillate flowers in clusters of 2-5, subsessile; sepals oblanceolate; petals vestigial. Capsules globose, 5-6 mm in diameter. (Martin and Hutchins 1980).

**AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION:**

**ILLUSTRATIONS:** Color photo of leaves and flowers with immature fruits

(<http://gardeninglaunchpad.com/valbf/bushcroton.html>).

Line drawing (Vines, 2994: 614).

Color photo of possible type (GH-47060, in

<http://brimsa.huh.harvard.edu/cms-wb/specimens.jsp?id=175764>)

Color photo of Syntype (NY-246432, in

<http://207.156.243.8/emu/vh/specimen.php?irn=167038>)

Color photos of plant and flower (In

[http://www.sbs.utexas.edu/mbierner/bio406d/images/pics/eup/croton\\_fruticosus.htm](http://www.sbs.utexas.edu/mbierner/bio406d/images/pics/eup/croton_fruticosus.htm))

**TOTAL RANGE:** Southern and western Texas to southeastern Arizona and northern Mexico.

**RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA:** Guadalupe Canyon, southeastern Cochise County.

### **SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS**

**GROWTH FORM:** Monoecious perennial shrub.

**PHENOLOGY:** Flowering occurs April and May.

#### **BIOLOGY:**

**HABITAT:** In Arizona, *C. fruticosus* occurs in canyon bottoms under oaks (Kearney and Peebles 1959). It occurs on rocky hills and canyons in New Mexico (Martin and Hutchins 1980). In Texas, it is frequent in brush on limestone uplands, while infrequent on caliche cuestas (Correll and Johnston 1970).

**ELEVATION:** 4,500 ft (1373 m) in Arizona. In New Mexico, the species ranges from 4,500 – 6,000 ft (1373-1830 m).

**EXPOSURE:** Southern exposures in New Mexico.

**SUBSTRATE:** Usually on limestone hills, bluffs, canyons, or rocky ravines.

#### **PLANT COMMUNITY:**

**POPULATION HISTORY AND TRENDS:** Unknown

### **SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION**

**ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS:** None

**STATE STATUS:** None

**OTHER STATUS:** None (USDI, BLM AZ 2005)  
[Bureau of Land Management Sensitive  
(USDI, BLM 2000)]

#### **MANAGEMENT FACTORS:**

**PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN:****SUGGESTED PROJECTS:**

**LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP:** BLM – Safford Field Office.

**SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION****REFERENCES:**

- Correll, D.S., and M.C. Johnston. 1970. Manual of the Vascular Plants of Texas. Texas Research Foundation, Renner, Texas. P. 932.
- Harvard University Herbaria. Index of Botanical Specimens. <http://brimsa.huh.harvard.edu/> Accessed: 2/2/2005.
- [http://www.sbs.utexas.edu/mbierner/bio406d/images/pics/eup/croton\\_fruticosus.htm](http://www.sbs.utexas.edu/mbierner/bio406d/images/pics/eup/croton_fruticosus.htm).
- Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS). Retrieved 2/2/2005 from ITIS, <http://www.itis.usda.gov>.
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- Martin, W.C, and C.R. Hutchins. 1980. A Flora of New Mexico. Volume 1. J. Cramer, Germany. Pp.716-717.
- Missouri Botanical Garden – TROPICOS, Nomenclatural Data Base. *Croton fruticosus* Engelm. ex Torr. [http://mobot.mobot.org/cgi-bin/search\\_vast](http://mobot.mobot.org/cgi-bin/search_vast). Accessed: 2 Feb 2005.
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- The New York Botanical Garden. NYBG Specimens Detailed Results. <http://207.156.243.8/emu/vh/specimen.php?irn=167038>. Accessed: 2/2/2005.
- USDA, NRCS. 2004. The PLANTS Database, Version 3.5 (<http://plants.usda.gov>). National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA.
- USDI, Bureau of Land Management. 2000. Arizona BLM Sensitive Species List. Information Memorandum No. AZ-2000-018.
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- Vines, R.A. 1994. Trees, shrubs and woody vines of the Southwest. University of Texas Press, Austin, TX. Pp. 614-615.

**MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS:****ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

The genus name, *Croton*, is the Greek name for “tick.” The species name, *fruticosus*, refers to its low shrubby habit. (Vines, 1994).

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